

Dressmaking: Pattern to Finished Dress

Eight-week series · Always In Stitches · Teacher Seline

WHAT THIS CLASS IS

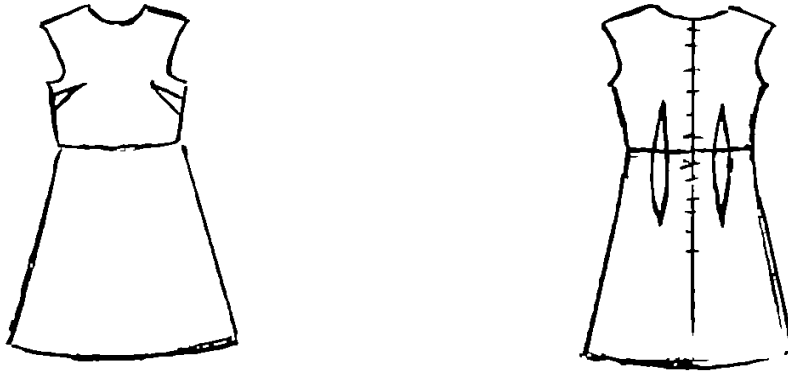
This class teaches proportional patternmaking. You take your own measurements, and from those measurements you draft a paper pattern that fits you. You will not use a commercial pattern, and you will not be resizing someone else's. Every line comes from your own numbers.

We use a few conversion formulas along the way — for example, the neck circumference sets the width and depth of the neckline, and the bust measurement sets the depth of the armhole. These come from traditional couture drafting. You do not need to memorise them. I will walk you through the drawing step by step.

In the last session we go one step further. Once you can draft a pattern from your own measurements, you can also read a commercial pattern and change it. I will show you how to lay your own draft against a bought pattern, see where the two differ, and make basic alterations so it fits you.

Please take notes. When you draw at home, you need to be able to find the answer in your own notebook. This is the most important habit in the class.

WHAT WE ARE MAKING

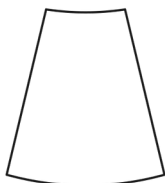


Left, front: bust dart at the side seam, no front waist dart. Right, back: two waist darts, invisible zipper at centre back.

The bodice has a bust dart but no front waist dart, so it sits comfortably rather than closely. Shaping at the back comes from two waist darts, and the invisible zipper goes into the centre back seam. The skirt is A-line by default, which moves well and suits every figure. Length is your choice.

HEM OPTIONS

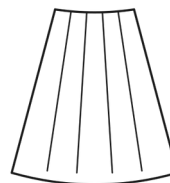
A-line is what we will draft together. If you want something else, choose from these and I will show you how to adapt the pattern.



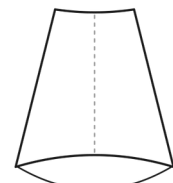
A-line
the default



Gathered
waist $\times$ 1.5 to 2



Pleated
waist $\times$ 3



High-low
shorter in front

Gathered and pleated skirts need noticeably more fabric than the three yards on the supply list. If you want one of those, come and talk to me before you buy.

SCHEDULE

Sep 25 Measuring, and the first lines

How to take and record measurements. Bust, waist and hip lines. Shoulder slope. Measurements used: bust, waist, hip, waist level, shoulder width, BP.

Oct 2 Front neckline and armhole

Neck circumference sets the neckline. Bust measurement sets the armhole depth. Arm measurement sets the armhole width.

Oct 9 Bust dart and side seam

BP and the distance between bust points set the dart. Side seam curve from underarm to hip. The front pattern is now complete.

Oct 16 No class holiday

Homework: redraw the front pattern completely, on a full sheet of paper, with clean lines. We will trace the back from it next week.

Oct 23 Back pattern and waist darts

Trace the back from your front pattern. Back neckline and back armhole. Back waist dart. Choose your hem. Homework: cut out the pattern pieces.

Oct 30 From paper to cloth

Check the cut pattern. Mark the darts on muslin and sew the test bodice. Bring your sewing machine.

Nov 6 Fitting

Fit the muslin and adjust the pattern. Come ready to work in pairs.

Nov 13 Construction techniques

Invisible zipper. Facings at the neckline, armhole and hem. Pressing. Bring your sewing machine.

Nov 20 – Nov 27 Break holiday

Sew your dress at home. Email me photographs if you get stuck.

Dec 4 Intro to Commercial Pattern Modification, and Show and Tell

Bring your finished dress and we look at everyone's work together. Then I will show you how to lay your own draft against a commercial pattern, find where the two differ, and make basic alterations. Demonstration and discussion, nothing to bring.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE YOU START

- All levels are welcome. You do not need to have drafted a pattern before.
- Please do not bring a sewing machine to the first class. I will tell you which sessions to bring it.
- A full supply list is provided separately. Fabric, thread, muslin and zippers are available in store.
- Sewing continues at home between sessions. The dress is finished at home over the break.
- Questions before class? Call or text 317-712-1238, or email mandarinteacherseline@gmail.com.